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00-ORL-012

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Addressees:

COMPLETION OF HANFORD FEDERAL FACILITY AGREEMENT AND CONSENT
ORDER (TRI-PARTY AGREEMENT) INTERIM MILESTONE M-91-04

This letter is to notify the State of Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of the completion of Tri-Party Agreement Interim Milestone M-91-04, which requires the U.S. Department of Energy, Richland Operations Office (RL), to:

"Complete construction of small container contact handled (CH) Transuranic/Transuranic Mixed waste (TRU/TRUM) retrieval facility(s) and initiate (Project W-113) retrieval of small container TRU/TRUM from 200 Area Burial Grounds."

"During initial facility operations, contact handled small container integrity will be evaluated and data used in further development of the retrieval campaign."

Project W-113 is a project which addresses retrieval of a portion of suspect TRU waste containers that are expected to be intact from containers having a low potential for questionable structural integrity or potential for contamination release to the environment.

Progress on completion of this interim milestone work was described at the Quarterly Milestone Reviews on March 23, 1999, and June 22, 1999. At these presentations, it was noted that the project differed from the original plan based on information learned about the need for containment enclosures. Investigations of similar retrieval operations at Savannah River, Los Alamos, and at Hanford demonstrated that waste containers can be retrieved from buried storage

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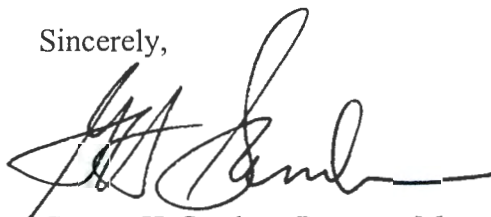
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without the need for containment enclosures, in a manner that does not pose a significant risk to workers or the environment. In addition, existing Hanford facilities, such as the Waste Receiving and Processing Facility, can be utilized for processing of the retrieved waste containers instead of constructing new facilities. As such, no new facilities will be built for Project W-113 TRU retrieval operations.

Retrieval operations began on July 22, 1999, when the first drums were removed from the drum module in Burial Ground 218-W-4C, Trench 29, in preparation for a confirmation assay. Evaluation of container integrity was performed on the initially retrieved drums and will continue as more drums are retrieved. This completes interim milestone M-91-04.

If you have any questions, please contact me on (509) 376-6888, or Todd Shrader, Waste Management Division, on (509) 376-2725.

Sincerely,



George H. Sanders, Program Manager
Office of Regulatory Liaison

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